

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENT

This Amendment cancels withdrawn Claims 1-20, 35, 40 and 45; amends Claims 21, 28-29 and 32; and adds new Claims 47-49. Support for the amendments is found in the specification and claims as originally filed. In particular, support is found in the specification at page 6, lines 9-10 ("active metal ... **dispersed** on the catalyst support") and page 10, line 11 ("active metal can be distributed homogenously **throughout** the catalyst support pellet"). Support for new Claim 47 is found in Claim 32. No new matter would be introduced by entry of these amendments.

Upon entry of these amendments, Claims 21-34, 36-39, 41-44 and 46-49 will be pending in this application. Claim 21 is independent. Claims 32-34, 36-39, 41-44 and 46 are withdrawn from consideration pursuant to a Restriction Requirement.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing and reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, in light of the remarks that follow.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to their representative during the personal interview on December 4, 2007.

As discussed at the personal interview, the present invention provides a catalyst for use in the production of hydrogen from fuel sources containing sulfur. The catalyst comprises a catalyst support comprising monoclinic zirconia; and Ir dispersed throughout the catalyst support.

Claims 21-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,034,029 ("Wulff-Doring") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,561,747 ("Symons").

Wulff-Doring discloses zirconium dioxide which is monoclinic to at least 80% by weight. Wulff-Doring at Abstract.

However, the Office Action admits that Wulff-Doring does not disclose Ir. Office Action at page 3, section 5, line 7,

Symons discloses a gas sensor electrolyte that can contain up to about 80 wt% monoclinic zirconia. Symons at column 2, lines 28-31. Symons discloses that, on an electrolyte layer 30, electrodes 20, 22 can comprise any catalyst capable of ionizing oxygen, including metals such as platinum, palladium and iridium. Symons at column 5, lines 38-42

However, the cited prior art fails to suggest the independent Claim 21 limitation of "Ir *dispersed throughout* the catalyst support".

Thus, the prior art rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 21 is objected to. To obviate the objection, as suggested by the Examiner, the recitation "that can be used for" is replaced with --for use in--.

Pursuant to M.P.E.P. § 821.04, after independent product Claim 21 is allowed, Applicants respectfully request examination and allowance of method Claims 32-34, 36-39, 41-44 and 46-48, which include all of the limitations of product Claim 21.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner acknowledge consideration of the references cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed August 1, 2006, by initialing the associated Form PTO-1449.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application.


Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
Norman F. Oblon

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413-2220
(OSMMN 06/04)


Corwin P. Umbach, Ph.D.
Registration No. 40,211